

Summary of Public Comment – Community Workshop #2

Workshop convened August 10, 2021 – 6:30-9:00 pm via Zoom

The City of Berkeley’s Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department and the San Francisco Water Emergency Transportation Authority hosted the second in a series of community workshops to solicit community feedback on the *Berkeley Pier and Ferry Feasibility Study*. Workshop #1, convened January 21st, introduced the project and pier ideas to the community. In Workshop #2, the project team presented two parking and land use concept plans and five pier concepts that were informed by comments in Workshop #1. Summarized below are key themes expressed in four simultaneous breakout sessions (15-20 people per group) from the workshop and questions and requests for information submitted during the workshop.

Topic 1 – Ferry Operations

Comments

- Ferry operations could impact aquatic habitat and should be avoided/mitigated.
- Conflicts appear possible between recreational watercraft and ferry operations. This should be studied closely, and a design and operation protocols defined to avoid such conflicts.

Questions and information requests:

1. What are the ferry ridership projections for the near- and long-term? Will work-from-home affect ridership demand? How is the long-term viability of a ferry service analyzed? How many trips per day are expected and with what percentage of vessel passenger capacity?
2. How does the carbon footprint of ferry commuting compare with bus and BART commuting?
3. Will electric ferries be used?
4. How is ferry ridership performing relative to initial projections at the Richmond terminal?
5. What size ferries is WETA considering? What is the smallest, viable size?

Topic 2 – Waterside Concepts

Comments

- Participants generally preferred **Option 1A/B ‘Sword’** (linear pier) for several reasons:
 - offers sense of walking out over the water further from land;
 - is reminiscent of the existing pier; and,
 - reduces potential ferry/recreational watercraft conflicts with ferries berthed on the north.
- Limited dredging should be a key criterion for any pier design.

- Consider all potential pier uses during design and sizing: walking and running, biking, bird watching, fishing, date night, and adventures with kids, among many others.
- Many participants would support a longer pier, if feasible.
- Consider the potential for energy generation on the pier with solar, wind, or wave.

Questions and information requests:

1. The proposed kayak/windsurf launch needs further study.
2. Why is the pier analysis limited to 1,000 feet? Can a longer pier be considered?
3. Are key BCDC, NEPA/CEQA, and sea-level rise issues part of the evaluation criteria?

Topic 3 – Landside Concepts

Comments

- Attendees generally preferred the Clustered Parking option for several reasons:
 - limits parking to a bounded area;
 - allows for multi-uses of the parking lot when demand is low; and,
 - offers convenient, proximate access to the ferry terminal.
- Parking facilities should not impact the needs of recreational users of the Waterfront.
- Shuttles and buses should drop commuters as close to the base of the pier as possible. Commuters arriving by car should pay market rate for parking as part of the ferry ticket price.
- Incentivize bike travel to the ferry with safe bikeways in/out of the Marina and to the pier.
- A BART corridor study (underway now) may be a helpful reference for creating a shuttle system to get people to the ferry from areas not serviced by AC Transit.

Questions and information requests:

1. The following topics should be presented/discussed: projected parking demand, available parking, and proposed parking management if ferry ridership is higher than projected.
2. In both concepts, the "recreation area" is close to the ferry. Where is the MARSEC section that will be off limits to non-passengers on each of these designs?

Topic 4 – General Comments

General

- The BMASP process should inform the pier/ferry planning process and decisions, which does not seem the case right now.
- The existing uses at the Waterfront of public recreation on land and water and its character of open space and community must be preserved should ferry service be introduced. Key areas of preservation include:
 - prevent traffic safety issues from increased morning/evening traffic to the ferry terminal;
 - provide sufficient parking for recreational users and other visitors during commute hours;
 - limit potential noise and lighting impacts from ferry operations; and,
 - avoid any large expanse of paved parking (e.g. Larkspur Landing ferry parking facility isn't desirable here).

Questions and requests for information

1. How are the interests of large employers and UC Berkeley represented in the planning process?
The mayor said these interests support the ferry.
2. Can an in-marina option for ferry service be evaluated as part of the feasibility study?
3. Why was ferry service rejected in 2010?
4. What are the financial implications of a new ferry service on the Marina Fund?